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The Association for Communications
Technology Professionals in
Higher Education

eNEWS

October 2005

Vol. 34, No. 10

Supporting higher education communications technology professionals in contributing to the achievement of the strategic mission of their institutions



From the President

Patricia H. Todus

Northwestern University

p-todus@northwestern.edu

Special Offer
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See page 8 for details.

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I hope you are planning to attend the Fall Seminars in Denver October 30-November 2. The Program Committee has selected two topics that are relevant to all of us: *Assessing the Value of New Technology Projects* and *Supporting Student Use of Technology*. Tony Mordosky, former ACUTA President from Rowan University, and I will be presenting a session we've entitled *The Relationship of Strategic Planning and IT Funding*. If you will be in the audience, I hope you will find the information we present useful on your campus. I'd like to share with you some of the ideas that will be a part of my presentation.

Strategic planning is certainly critical to our success. My experience at Northwestern University has taught me that there are at least three reasons why strategic planning for IT is so vitally important:

- (1) It aligns technology direction with what we call the Highest Order of Excellence, the University's strategic plan, and school and administrative department plans.
- (2) It enhances communications and develops stakeholders and partners within the Northwestern community.
- (3) It develops a roadmap for technology funding decision making.

Before the strategic planning process begins I meet with vice presidents and deans to listen to their strategic vision and their goals for the next two to three years. These meetings are followed by meetings with our Information Technology committees which provides an even broader perspective on the needs for technology. While these meetings are taking place, our Information Technology directors meet with their staff to discuss ideas and issues that should be considered during planning sessions. Our goal is to arrive at our annual strategic planning retreat with as much information as possible.

At the retreat, we have open discussion of the interviews and review staff input. Guest speakers bring their ideas to the planning table. We review the current plan and the "SWOT"—Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. We develop strategic objectives and operational objectives, and we review NUIT mission, goals, and principles. Next we commit our new or refined strategic and operational objectives into clear, written descriptions, develop business plans, prepare preliminary project plans, and then prioritize objectives for the first budget year.

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One of the most important outcomes of our strategic planning process is the opportunity to listen and communicate with all levels in the University community. This happens at the beginning of the process, at the refinement stage, and when we finally share the completed three-year University Information Technology Strategic Plan with our key stakeholders, including our staff, committees, trustees, deans and vice presidents, and the broader NU community.

Funding of these strategic initiatives is an important part of the success of the Information Technology Strategic Plan. To that end, we have found that annual strategic planning has enabled the University's technology plan. It provides the University's Budget and Planning Committee with a roadmap to review the many technology requirements and make decisions based on what is in place today, what needs to be expanded, and what is necessary for the future.

The strategic planning model was instrumental in building a new funding model for converged communications that:

- Creates a sustainable funding model for communications services now and in the future
- Provides "core services" to the NU community
- Removes financial disincentives to using technology and
- Allows an affordable migration plan.

In our new funding model, communications services have been divided into "core" and "non-core." This has changed dramatically the way we charge for the blended services now known as converged services.

Our information technology strategic plan does not sit on a shelf. Strategic and operational objectives are tracked throughout the year, and the plan is refreshed and refined every year.

We all plan in some way for the future in our personal and business lives and refresh our plans as necessary. We plan our finances to send our children to college, family vacations, and, of course, our retirement. We plan for our own education to keep our skills sharp, our career path, and new business opportunities. So why not also lead the charge to plan for technology at our institutions of higher education?

Quoting John M. Bryson from his book *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*, "Strategic Planning is a disciplined effort to produce fundamental discussions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does and why it does it." I look forward to sharing, in more detail, with you in Denver the benefits of strategic planning for technology on your campus.



Board Report September

Riny Ledgerwood
San Diego State Univ.
Secretary/Treasurer
rlledgerw@mail.sdsu.edu

The Board of Directors met by conference call on September 16. The Board discussed the potential effects of hurricane Katrina on ACUTA member institutions, and expressed hopes and support for the recovery efforts.

Several committee appointments were approved.

The Board reviewed the proposed 2005-06 Regional Workshop Budget, concurring with the recommendation to offer one regional workshop this coming year.

The Board was informed that there has been a lot of interest in the VoIP Communities of Interest Task Force, and there are 222 subscribers on that group's listserv.

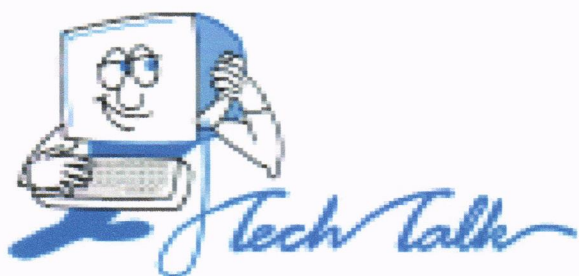
The Board received a report regarding the FCC Consumer Advisory Committee and discussed opportunities for appointments to its Working Groups.

The Board reviewed and approved a proposal to conduct a survey regarding the Annual Conference.

The Board also authorized the Secretary/Treasurer to develop recommendations for investment policies for ACUTA's reserve funds.

Respectfully submitted,

Riny Ledgerwood
Secretary/Treasurer



Don't Let Data Become Casualty of a Disaster

Kevin Tanzillo
Dux PR
kevin@duxpr.com

One thing that the horrific devastation wrought by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita should have demonstrated for all of us is the need to be prepared for the worst in any disaster recovery planning that we do.

Most of the disasters we think of are much more limited in scope. Maybe a fire, a massive snowstorm, a tornado, an earthquake, or God forbid, a terrorist's bomb. All are terrible occurrences for the loss of life and damage they bring. But Katrina raised the bar in terms of how bad things can get.

Just think for a minute if your campus had to be completely shut down for, at minimum, several weeks. There would be no electric power and no communication capabilities. And when you were allowed to return, the water damage and toxic sludge would have rendered most everything unworkable.

How can you begin to plan ahead to recover from something so overwhelming? You can't, but you have to try. Now that the hurricanes have shown us all a glimpse of what the "worst case" looks like, perhaps it can sharpen your focus.

The single most important element to keep in mind is your data. It is the one thing that, when lost, can't be replicated. They can rebuild buildings, outfit new data centers, and buy the spiffiest new PBXs; but if student and faculty and other critical records are gone for good, the institution is lost.

That makes it hard not to justify some form of real-time, off-site backup arrangement. With these services, if a disaster strikes at 2:15 p.m., you know that the data as of 2:14:59 is safe and accurate. Maybe make sure it's one of those services that retains everything inside a mountain in Colorado, just to give yourself more security.

Too many organizations and companies engage in the corporate equivalent of the lazy-user backup. You know (we've all done it), we back up our files onto a CD or DVD, and then put the backup disc in a desk drawer. That's a fine system if the only disaster is that your computer crashes, but doesn't anticipate fires, theft, or natural disasters.

There are many providers of offsite backup services, so it does take time to evaluate them and find the one that best fits your institution's needs. The service will not be inexpensive, but considering that it is impossible to put a value on lost data, it's a good investment.

By the way, one problem area to keep in mind as you chart the data backup portion of your disaster recovery plan is how much important data may be residing in places beyond your control. Faculty and staff who have laptops and who work offsite at least occasionally may have modified some data or created handy files of their own to track some data. While you'll never get all of this data replicated, part of your ongoing strategy should be to make sure that individual users know the importance of making frequent backups and what to do with the storage media once they have backed up.

Think about the emptiness the Gulf Coast evacuees must feel after having fled the area and knowing the irreplaceable things are gone forever: photo albums, favorite mementos, family heirlooms. Think of data as your organization's irreplaceable thing.

As always, if there are specific topics you would like to see covered in this space, please let me know via e-mail at kevin@duxpr.com.

Help Us Expand the Network—
Introduce a Colleague to ACUTA!

"In the Event of an Emergency..."

Rich Lehn

Univ. of North Dakota
richlehn@mail.und.nodak.edu

In the spring of 1997, I was director of the telecommunications department at the University of North Dakota. When the Red River flooded Grand Forks, the campus functioned as the control center for basic operations. We provided telecommunications services for the University and the community. Watching the disasters in recent weeks, I offer the following tips for those who face an unexpected emergency.

Tetanus Shots. You need to get a tetanus shot as soon as possible. Working under these conditions, you need to stay healthy. Disease spreads quickly. Make certain you have ample supplies of waterless anti bacterial soap to wash your hands.

Work In Teams. Disaster work is dangerous so whenever and where ever, work in teams. Equip your crews with cellular phones or pagers and stay in communications with your staff so you know where they are should something happen to anyone.

Remote Programmer. If at all possible, have one of your staff located outside of the area where they can use a laptop computer to do programming remotely. This can be a great benefit to you as you take a break from the demands being placed on you or when you become overwhelmed by what is going on around you.

Outsource Repairs. You will want to outsource your post flood inspection and repairs. Contracted work is easier to make claims with FEMA than it is when in-house technicians are used.

When in-house technicians are used, FEMA will reimburse you for the actual hourly salary of the technician and not at your service department's hourly billing rate. Materials are billed at your cost. This leaves no mechanism to recover costs associated with depreciation recovery or overhead.

Additionally, this allows your in-house technicians to concentrate on other things instead of doing flood damaged cable plant repairs.

Keep Records. Maintain a log book of all the work you and your staff do as it will be helpful in documenting any claims you turn in to FEMA or insurance claims. Additionally, it is helpful as a log of what you went through for historical purposes.

FYI

Useful Information from the Campus

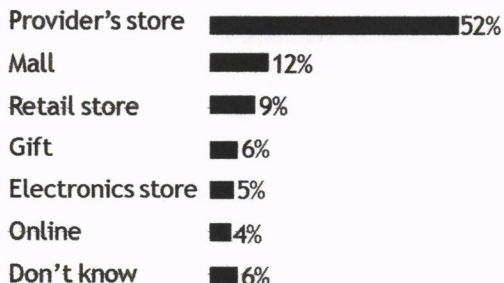
<http://www.studentmonitor.com>

In March 2005, Student Monitor of Ridgewood, NJ, conducted extensive research into how students are using communications technology on campus today. ACUTA eNews is pleased to feature selected results of that survey. We appreciate Student Monitor's assistance as we strive to provide the most useful and up-to-date information to our readers.

If you would like to know more about the survey, contact Eric Weil, managing partner at Student Monitor, at weil@studentmonitor.com, or visit their website at <http://www.studentmonitor.com>.

Where Cell Provider Was Acquired

Students spent an average of nearly 2.5 hours shopping for their provider. (53% spent 1 hour or less.)



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Length of Time Using a Cell Phone

- 80% (up from 72% last year) of cell phone owners have had their cell phone for more than a year.
- An increasing number of cell owners have had their phone for more than 36 months (39%, up from 27% last year and 14% three years ago).

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1 year or less	20	28	36	41	54	54	52	55
13-24 months	22	24	24	30	29	23	24	26
25-36 months	19	22	17	15	9	12	14	13
36 months+	39	27	23	14	9	11	10	6
Avg. (months)	35	30	26	23	18	19	19	17

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Ownership of Conduits

From the ACUTA Listserv

If you are not a regular participant on ACUTA's listserv, you may not realize what a valuable resource it has become. The following exchange is an example of the kind of excellent information-sharing that happens regularly on the listserv. (Members may subscribe from the ACUTA homepage. Just click on Member Services, then choose Telecom Listserv and Archive and follow simple instructions.)

Benny Kurashima at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo asked: On our campus there are LEC-installed cables and conduits that pre-date divestiture. For all practical purposes, there are no services on these cables; but since there is an air support system, we asked the LEC to provide information on the process to remove unneeded cable segments. Our LEC provided a quote, somewhat reasonable, to remove the cable, but informed us that if we want to use the conduit, we will have to lease the conduit space from them.

Does anyone know if this lease arrangement is valid or should I request that the LEC remove their conduit, too?

Dave Barta, University of Oregon, replied: In Oregon, if you want the LEC to provide service to a building they ask you to install conduit to the property line for them to connect to. You own the conduit, they fill it with their cable. Hard to see why the scenario you describe would be different even though it predates divestiture.

Also, after divestiture, Qwest ceded all the infrastructure they had under our campus that served our buildings to us and at our request (accompanied by some minimal \$) even gave us their drawings. We diverted some of the cable and spliced into it for some outliers.

If there's some chance that it is serving people outside your campus (just passing through) you might ask them to produce the easement documents.

Or you might feign a small but convenient backhoe confrontation with the conduit near the campus edge, but on the campus side of the boundary. Presuming you have a one-call locate system, you could call the impending excavation in and see how they respond. If they mark it, don't cut it since they will be in a better position to make you fix it and it will then force you to really legally deal with the issue with a penalty if you ultimately get the wrong answer. In Oregon, if they fail to mark it, you can dig it up without liability, and if you do that and nobody seems to notice or care, it would tell you a lot about the status of the conduit with the LEC.

But I think if the conduit is all on your property and only served your buildings and is unused, it's probably yours now. Good luck.

(Dave edited his reply slightly for this newsletter.)

Post Positions Online

WEB
TIP

Aaron Fuehrer
ACUTA Information
Technology Manager
afuehrer@acuta.org

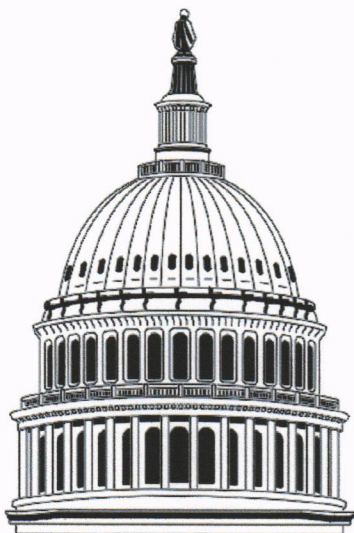
Part of ACUTA's mission is to help you fulfill *your* mission. Finding qualified employees is certainly one of the keys to success. Where else but ACUTA could you find people with all the right experience to step confidently in and get to work?

Take advantage of ACUTA's website to post communications technology positions open at your institution—a free service to ACUTA members.

Visit the website at <http://www.acuta.org/dynamic/jobs/jobpost.cfm>.

Complete and submit the form, and your listing will be available for at least 30 days.

If you are looking for a position or know someone who is, consider the website a potential resource and check it regularly.



DC Update

Whitney Johnson
Northern Michigan University
(Retired)
wjohnson@nmu.edu

Hearing Aid Compatibility Waiver

Cingular Wireless LLC has asked for a waiver of the modified rules the FCC approved in June that implement the Hearing Aid Compatibility (HAC) Act. These rules gave Tier I carriers until September 16 to offer four HAC-compliant digital phone models or models totaling 25% of those they offer for each air interface. The rules have at least three ratings—U1, U2, and U3—for both the 1.9 GHz band and the 850 MHz band.

Cingular has said it expects to be able to comply with the U# mandate for the 1.9 GHz band, but that it would only reach the U1/U2 rating for the 850 MHz band.

Earlier this year, several handset manufacturers told the FCC they were finding it difficult to achieve the mandated M3 or M4 HAC ratings for GSM (Global System for Mobile communications) phones that operate in the 850 MHz band. (Some of the data regarding HAC equipment uses M instead of U when referring to the ratings.) [*Telecommunications Reports* (TR) 8/15/05]

Cingular is not the only company having problems meeting the FCC rules and deadlines.

Dialing 933

Vonage Holdings Corp has deployed an abbreviated dialing feature, 933, to enable customers to check on their emergency dialing system without having to dial 911. When testing the system using 933, the caller does not tie up the public safety answering point. Dialing 911 to test the system may add to the problems using the PSAP system, particularly if there is an emergency going on at the time in the area covered by the PSAP. (TR 8/15/05)

Some Bills in Congress

A bill introduced in the Senate by Sens. Ensign (R., Nev.) and McCain (R., Ariz.), called the Broadband Investment and Consumer Choice Act (S1504), has some strong opposition from consumers and local governments. Opponents say it could lead to increased prices, delay broadband deployment, and interfere with the ability of state and local governments to protect consumers. One of the consumer groups involved, Consumers Union (CU), argued that the bill could mean higher phone, cable TV, and Internet service bills for customers.

Among the specific provisions that CU criticized was eliminating the ability of states and communities to prevent phone and cable price gouging and other consumer rip-offs, apparently a reference to the imposition of national standards on consumer protections and the elimination of local video service franchises. CU also charged that the bill will hinder the ability of local government to expand competition and drive down broadband prices by limiting their ability to offer the services themselves. The Mayor of Arvada, Colorado, who chairs the National League of Cities (NLC) committee on Information Technology and Communication, indicated that the NLC group would be working with members of Congress during the August recess about "the crippling impact this [bill] would have on our ability as local governments to manage our public rights-of-way and serve our citizens." Several others were listed in the article covering their objections to the bill. (TR 8/15/05)

Senate bill S1583, called the Universal Service for the 21st Century Act, was introduced by Sens. Smith (R., Ore), Dorgan (D., N.D.), and Pryor (D., Ark.). This bill would authorize universal service support for broadband services in unserved areas and would expand the contribution base for the Universal Service Fund. Among other things, the bill would authorize the USF to set up a separate account to be known as the Broadband for Unserved Areas Account which would have a cap set at \$500 million annually. This bill will require the FCC to establish eligibility criteria and subsidy guidelines, to decide which areas of the U. S. are

to be considered unserved areas. Only one provider will be allowed to receive support in any given unserved area. The FCC will have only six months after the bill becomes law to establish intercarrier compensation rules to be sure that interstate and intrastate costs are fully recoverable and minimize opportunities for arbitrage. (TR 8/15/05)

For More In-Depth Coverage of Legislative & Regulatory Issues:

ACUTA members may read about the latest developments in telecommunications and Internet-related issues in the most recent **Legislative and Regulatory Update**, an electronic newsletter prepared monthly by Wiley, Rein & Fielding. Access this newsletter at <http://www.acuta.org/relation/DownloadFile.cfm?docNum=309>

Another bill, the Fraud Enforcement with Enforcers Beyond Borders Act, was introduced in July by Sens. Smith (R., Ore.), McCain (R., Ariz.), Inouye (D., Hawaii), and Nelson (D., Fla.). The bill, also called the U.S. SAFE WEB Act (S1608), is set up to increase information sharing and investigative cooperation between U. S. and foreign law enforcement officials and to enhance the confidentiality of the federal platforms in rural areas of Trade Commission investigations. Sen. Smith indicated that the FTC has seen an increase in consumer fraud complaints that relate to foreign entities in the past decade from 1% to 10% of the total complaints. (TR 8/15/05)

Broadband Loans

The Rural Development unit of the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture (USDA) has approved \$31.6 million in loans to fund broadband facilities using three different technology platforms in Alabama, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Hampshire, and Virginia. This program was announced at the Indiana State Fair on August 18 by the Deputy Secretary of the USDA.

These projects will be the first such funding of broadband-over-power-lines (BPL) infrastructure to be implemented. They will be making a loan of \$19.2 million to International Broadband Electric Communications, Inc. (IBEC) and will be working with electric cooperatives in Virginia, Indiana, and Alabama in the process of adding BPL technology to existing power lines. IBEC will have a partner in each state. In Virginia, the partner will be Central Virginia Electric Cooperative; in Indiana it will be South Central Indiana Electric Cooperative; and in Alabama the partner will be Cullman Electric Cooperative. These three companies serve a combined 103,753 households and 2,616 businesses in the three states.

The second loan for \$4.4 million will go to Bay Broadband Communications to build a wireless high-speed network with 92 distribution sites in Maryland's Eastern Shore region. This company currently offers residential, business, and marine services and says it will offer voice-over-Internet protocol (VoIP) service soon. The USDA indicated that the network would serve 14 communities in four counties, and that nearly 5,000 homes and more than 3,000 businesses are projected to subscribe initially. These numbers indicate a cost of about \$550 per subscriber.

In Michigan the company noted is Allband Communications Cooperative of Hillman, Mich. They will receive the third loan of \$8 million, and the plan is to fund the construction of a fiber-to-the-home network, bringing telephone service to more than 300 residential and business subscribers in northeastern Michigan in a previously unserved area.

These three companies will be receiving the total of \$31.6 million in the loans mentioned for the Broadband Loan Fund; however, under a separate program, another \$2.7 million loan along with a grant for \$268,000 were approved for the New London Hospital Association in New Hampshire. This program is from a 10-year-old program aimed at bringing state-of-the-art telemedicine and distance-learning facilities to medical and educational institutions in the state. (TR 9/1/05)

FCC Appraisal of Broadband Deployment

Two consumer groups, the Consumer Federation of America and the Consumers Union, and a public-interest media-policy organization, Free Press, have assessed the FCC broadband deployment and have indicated that the FCC document "is misleading and glosses over serious problems behind an ever-widening digital divide." In the FCC report they defined a high speed connection as "one able to transmit more than 200 kilobits of data per second in one direction." The group indicated that this speed is just four times faster than the typical dial-up connection but far below what countries like Canada consider to be broadband. They indicated that residents in other countries pay a lot less for higher-speed connections.

The group did a worldwide study and found eight nations that are performing better than the U. S.: Korea, Netherlands, Denmark, Iceland, Canada, Finland, Norway, and Sweden. Many of these countries have a lot of very rural areas within their borders and not many large cities. Some of the FCC information released indicates that they are trying to work on the high density areas first in the broadband deployment plans. (TR 9/1/05)

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Augusta State University, Augusta, GA. T2

Werner (Chip) Matson, Dir. Info. Tech. Svcs.; 706/737-1484 cmatson@aug.edu

College of Mount Saint Joseph, Cincinnati, OH. T1

Keith Weber, CIO; 513/244-4350 keith_weber@mail.msje.edu

Dillard Univ., New Orleans. T1

Terry Simon, Assoc. VP, Info Tech & Telecom; 504/816-4716 tsimon@dillard.edu

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David Mullins, VP, Inst. Resch, Adv, Tech, & Accred; 662/476-5061 . dmullins@eastms.edu

Everett Community College, Everett, WA. T3

Lynda Upton, Admin. Asst.; 425/388-9190 lupton@everettcc.edu

Hampton University, Hampton, VA. T2

Debra White, Asst. Provost for Tech.; 757/728-6988 ... debrasaunderswhite@hampton.edu

Morrisville State College, Morrisville, NY. T2

Jean L. Boland, VP Info Tech Svcs.; 315/684-6053 bolandjl@morrisville.edu

Nicholls State University, Thibodaux, LA. T3

Tom Bonvillain, Dir. of Academic Computing; 985/449-7173 ... tom.bonvillain@nicholls.edu

University of Hawaii System Office, Honolulu, HI. T1

Garret Yoshimi, Telecom Mgr.; 808/956-4566 gyoshimi@hawaii.edu

Virginia Military Institute, Lexington, VA. T1

Tom Hopkins, Dir., Info. Tech.; 540/464-7703 hopkinstf@vmi.edu

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Cordia Communications, White Plains, NY <http://www.cordia.us>

Dave Coughlin, Dir. of Sales; 914/948-5550

Cordia Communications, a subsidiary of Cordia Corporation (OTCBB:CORC), is a communications services firm offering wireline, DSL, T-1, and VoIP services to small business and residential customers nationwide. We recently commenced global expansion of VoIP.

Special Offer:

**Register for ACUTA's
 Fall Seminars by October 7
 and you could save as much
 as \$145!**

For the Fall Seminars in Denver, we are offering a special multiple-attendee discount. The first person from a campus or company to register pays the full price for registration. All additional attendees from that institution or company pay \$100 less.

In addition, we have extended the early registration discount to October 7.

Hurry! Register Today and Save!

<http://www.acuta.org>

ACUTA Events Calendar

Fall Seminars Oct. 30-Nov. 2, 2005 ... Denver, CO

Track 1. Assessing the Value of New Technology Projects

Track 2. Supporting Student Use of Technology

Winter Seminars January 8-11, 2006 Palm Springs, CA

Track 1. Mobility and Wireless Issues

Track 2. Best Practices in Telecom Management

Spring Seminars April 2-5, 2006 Providence, RI

Track 1. VoIP and Its Applications

Track 2. Network Survivability

Annual Conference .. July 23-27, 2006 San Diego, CA

Satisfaction Guaranteed

ACUTA stands behind the quality of its seminars and conferences. If you do not believe your time and money were well invested, ACUTA will refund your registration fee. Just write to us within one week following the end of the event.